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Operational activities for development: South-South cooperation for development

State of South-South cooperation

Report of the Secretary-General**

Summary

The present report was prepared pursuant to General Assembly resolution 69/239, in which the Assembly requested the Secretary-General to submit to it at its seventieth session a comprehensive report on the state of South-South cooperation, including an assessment of concrete measures that the United Nations development system has taken to improve its support to South-South cooperation during 2014-2015. After having incorporated South-South cooperation into their strategic plans and performance indicators in the past year, United Nations funds, programmes and specialized agencies, and the regional commissions have taken concrete steps to bolster the mainstreaming of South-South cooperation in their local, national and regional programmatic activities. The report contains recommendations for further improvement of United Nations system-wide mainstreaming of South-South cooperation and for leveraging such cooperation during the implementation of the post-2015 development agenda once it is adopted.

At the request of Member States, support by the United Nations Development Programme to South-South and triangular cooperation and to the United Nations Office for South-South Cooperation, and the related actions taken by the Administrator as Chair of the United Nations Development Group during the reporting period, are described in a report (SSC/18/IM/1) that I am submitting to the High-level Committee on South-South Cooperation at its intersessional meeting on 8 September 2015.

* A/70/150.

** Broad consultations delayed completion of this report.

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I. Introduction

1. The past two decades have witnessed an increase in trade, investment, development assistance and other exchanges between developing countries. However, the global context for these forms of South-South cooperation is now in flux owing to a slowdown in demand for goods and services in traditional centres of the global economy. For the first time in the past decade, emerging economies experienced successive negative growth rates for four consecutive years from 2011 to 2014.[1]

2. Despite having greatly increased during the past decade, South-South trade has stagnated since 2011.[2] South-South trade in goods for 2013 was valued at approximately $5 trillion. As in previous years, intraregional trade continued to be lower in Latin America and Africa. In 2013, more than 75 per cent of South-South trade was either to or from countries in the Asia region, reflecting variations in the extent of global integration vis-à-vis other regions.

3. Foreign direct investment (FDI) shows a different picture. Global FDI inflows fell by 16 per cent to $1.23 trillion in 2014, mostly owing to the fragility of the global economy, policy uncertainty for investors and elevated geopolitical risks. At the same time, FDI flows to developing economies reached their highest level ever, at $681 billion, representing a 2 per cent increase. Developing economies thus extended their lead in global inflows, with China becoming the world's largest recipient of FDI. Developing economies also account for more than one third of global FDI outflows, up from 13 per cent in 2007. Outward FDI stock from developing economies to other developing economies grew by two-thirds, from $1.7 trillion in 2009 to $2.9 trillion in 2013, with East Asia and Southeast Asia the largest recipient developing regions. The share of the poorest developing regions in South-South FDI is still growing from a small base.[3]

4. In the wake of these global trends, the countries of the South are moving towards more formalized and institutionalized forms of South-South cooperation. Two notable efforts in this regard are the launching of the $100 billion New Development Bank in July 2015, followed by the ongoing establishment of the Asian Infrastructure Investment Bank; both institutions present new opportunities to finance investments for sustainable development.

5. Against this backdrop of opportunity and risk, developing countries turn to the United Nations system for support for their South-South initiatives. Up to 80 per cent of the United Nations resident coordinators who responded to a 2014 survey by the Department of Economic and Social Affairs indicated that they had received requests from Governments of developing countries to support their cooperation with other countries of the South. In this regard, developing countries seek multilateral cooperation enabling them to gain increased access to the knowledge and expertise of other Southern countries and to identify partners in key strategic areas such as industry, trade and investment, knowledge and technology transfer, economic growth and employment, environment and natural resource management (see A/70/62-E/2015/4).

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[1] International Monetary Fund, *World Economic Outlook, April 2015*.

[2] United Nations Conference on Trade and Development (UNCTAD), *Key Statistics and Trends in International Trade 2014*, United Nations, 2015.

[3] UNCTAD, *World Investment Report 2015*, United Nations, New York and Geneva, 2015.

6. The present report, which builds on my report on the state of South-South cooperation in 2014 (A/69/153), presents an illustrative rather than exhaustive account of how the United Nations has responded to these and other demands on the basis of information gathered by the United Nations Office for South-South Cooperation and received from various United Nations organizations and agencies in 2015. It shows that, having included South-South cooperation in their strategic plans for 2014-2017, many United Nations organizations and agencies have taken further measures to design and implement policies and strategies to advance such cooperation. In the process, United Nations support to South-South policy dialogue has continued to grow, as has assistance to Southern networks. This is leading to an increasing volume of research and analysis spotlighting South-South cooperation in areas such as clean energy and decent work solutions, improvement in access to essential medicines, technology and other innovations. Also notable is the growing support of middle-income countries for improved food, nutrition and energy security. South-South efforts to address climate change, rapid urbanization, youth underemployment and the paucity of human and institutional capacities also receive considerable support from the United Nations system.

7. As requested by Member States, support by the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP) to South-South and triangular cooperation and to the United Nations Office for South-South Cooperation, and the related actions taken by the Administrator as Chair of the United Nations Development Group during the reporting period, are described in the report I shall submit to the intersessional meeting of the High-level Committee on South-South Cooperation on 8 September 2015 (SSC/18/IM/1).

II. State of support by the United Nations development system to South-South cooperation

8. The period 2014-2015 has seen further efforts to integrate South-South and triangular cooperation into new transformational frameworks, most notably at the global level in the post-2015 development agenda, to be adopted at the seventieth session of the General Assembly, in 2015, and at the agency level.

A. Policy frameworks and strategies

9. Building on existing global frameworks and on their own strategic plans for 2014-2017, many United Nations funds, programmes and specialized agencies have reiterated and/or devised additional agency-specific thematic strategies in 2015 that use South-South cooperation and triangular cooperation as key tools for the implementation of strategic plans, as illustrated by the examples below.

10. The International Labour Organization (ILO) drafted its programme and budget for 2016-2017, in which South-South and triangular cooperation are regarded as means by which ILO can draw on its particular advantages, building on the experience and knowledge of its tripartite constituents to develop capacity, share knowledge, exchange experiences and good practices, promote interregional cooperation and mobilize resources.

11. The United Nations Industrial Development Organization (UNIDO) has transitioned to a new mandate on inclusive sustainable industrial development. South-South cooperation is incorporated in this mandate, its new operational approach and its medium-term programme framework for 2014-2015. UNIDO is also developing a new operational strategy for South-South and triangular industrial cooperation for approval in 2015. The 2016-2017 budget also has South-South cooperation embedded in it.

12. With South-South cooperation already a priority in its strategic framework, 2014-2017, its youth volunteering strategy, 2014-2017, and its partnership strategy, 2014-2017, the United Nations Volunteers (UNV) has in the past year facilitated the sharing and transfer of skills and experience across different groups of developing countries. In addition, in order to increase and diversify young people's opportunities to contribute to global peace and sustainable human development, UNV has established a youth volunteer modality grounded in the principles of gender parity, South-South and national placements, and inclusion of marginalized youth.

13. In 2015, the World Food Programme (WFP) developed its first policy on South-South and triangular cooperation, designed to expand its engagement in developing countries and facilitate progress towards the objectives of the Zero Hunger Challenge and the proposed sustainable development goals.

14. The Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations (FAO) is developing a guide to South-South cooperation along with other capacity support tools to advance South-South cooperation at the country level as a means of implementing priorities agreed by FAO and national Governments.

15. In its Strategic Plan for 2014-2017, UNDP has made a clear and substantial commitment to utilize South-South and triangular cooperation as one of its core ways of working at the global, regional and country levels. This will be further reinforced by the forthcoming corporate strategy for South-South and triangular cooperation.

16. As in the past, the World Health Organization (WHO) has reflected South-South and triangular cooperation in its twelfth general programme of work and in its programme budget for 2016-2017. Noting WHO representation in some 150 countries, territories and areas, the programme restates the WHO role as provider of technical support to member States, facilitating increased links within and between countries in the interest of South-South and triangular cooperation.

B. Mainstreaming South-South cooperation

17. In meeting the growing demand for United Nations support to South-South cooperation and in response to General Assembly resolution 69/239 and decision 18/1 of the High-level Committee on South-South Cooperation, the organizations of the United Nations development system also took steps to increase the application of South-South cooperation nationally and regionally by implementing their adopted strategic plans throughout their national and regional programmatic activities, often devising new platforms and mechanisms for collaboration. As described below, their support to South-South cooperation continues to be seen in policy development and dialogue; research and analysis; the brokering of knowledge; support to capacity

development; the development of partnerships and innovative financing; and monitoring and evaluation of South-South cooperation programmes and other initiatives.

1. Policy development and dialogue

18. In the past year, United Nations organizations have continued to support the shaping of South-South policy thinking and strategies at the national, regional and international levels. Building on the momentum of their adopted strategic plans, many organizations sought to devise their own thematically focused South-South cooperation policies in 2014, expanding on global agreements to drive national and regional South-South dialogue relevant to their mandated areas of work.

19. In 2015, the Unit for Economic Cooperation and Integration among Developing Countries of the United Nations Conference on Trade and Development (UNCTAD) completed a project on promoting regional value chains in Africa. The project identified potential regional value chains in leather industries on the continent. The results were discussed and endorsed in two regional industry consultations. The project has led to successful partnerships between the private sector in Africa and other developing regions, and to the signing of memorandums of understanding between regional leather companies. Currently, there are discussions on the signing of a technology agreement to encourage the sharing of low-cost technology solutions. There is also a proposal that a regional design studio be set up, in collaboration with other developing countries, with a clear blueprint to enhance design capacities in Africa in leather products. UNCTAD organized seminars on financial integration and cooperation in Latin America and in West and Central Africa to share experiences. The participants included senior policymakers from regional development banks, central banks, ministries and United Nations organizations focused on policies for long-term development finance in promoting interregional infrastructure investment and interregional trade.

20. During the reporting period, UNIDO, together with the Governments of China and Ethiopia and the World Bank, organized the July 2015 China-Africa Investment Forum, which addressed ways of linking policy issues with concrete partnership programmes through a sector-specific, country-focused approach. In 2015, the UNIDO Centre for South-South Industrial Cooperation organized project-focused policy dialogue on the New Silk Road and the Maritime Silk Road. It also facilitated the conference on fostering inclusive and sustainable industrial development in middle-income countries from Europe and Central Asia, which focused on industrial development activities in a South-South context.

21. In 2014, the United Nations Environment Programme (UNEP) signed an agreement with the Chinese National Development and Reform Commission to enhance South-South collaboration in addressing climate change. The agreement will help to harness the strengths, capacities and resources of UNEP and China to assist countries of the global South to combat climate change. In follow-up to the agreement, UNEP, the Commission and UNDP organized the South-South Cooperation on Climate Change Forum as a side event at the 2014 United Nations Climate Change Conference. The Forum called for the establishment of a platform for the promotion of South-South cooperation on climate change as a long-term multilateral mechanism led by the United Nations to enhance knowledge-sharing, capacity-building, policy advice and technology exchange across developing

countries. In March 2015, UNEP, the United Nations Human Settlements Programme (UN-Habitat) and Tongji University, China, with support from the Ministry of Science and Technology of China and the government of Shanghai, organized a workshop on planning for greener cities and South-South cooperation between China and Africa under the UNEP and UN-Habitat Greener Cities Partnership. The workshop was attended by mayors and department heads from eight cities in Africa and their counterparts in Chinese cities.

22. In 2014, the WFP Centre of Excellence against Hunger in Brazil organized study visits for delegations from 11 countries in Africa, Asia and Latin America. The Centre provides long-term support to developing countries for the creation and strengthening of policies on sustainable national food and nutrition security, especially school feeding, integrated with social protection and inclusion. To facilitate experiences in successful school feeding programmes, WFP, in collaboration with the Federal District of Mexico and the Latin America and the Caribbean School-Feeding Network, organized the sixth regional School-Feeding Seminar in Mexico City. More than 250 partners from 18 countries in the region participated in the event, at which Governments shared their experiences, challenges and visions to strengthen national school-feeding programmes. In Asia, a conference on scaling up rice fortification, co-organized by WFP, facilitated the sharing of experiences and innovative practices in rice fortification among countries in the region.

23. A number of high-level South-South and triangular cooperation events were convened by FAO during the reporting period, including a side event on achieving food security through South-South and triangular cooperation at the FAO Council meeting in Rome in June 2014. The event brought together over 60 high-level delegates and representatives of Governments and served to promote South-South cooperation as a cost-effective delivery mechanism for priorities agreed between national Governments and FAO. Similarly, an international conference convened in Morocco in December 2014 brought together ministers of agriculture and high-level representatives from more than 20 African countries to exchange knowledge on water management, financing and innovation in family farming.

24. The United Nations Population Fund (UNFPA) has convened regional and interregional policy dialogues to advance the agenda of the International Conference on Population and Development. One such initiative was the high-level consultation on the regional convention on using law to promote accountability to end child marriage in Asia, at which participating countries benefited from policy and technical exchanges.

25. WHO continues to organize global and regional forums to drive South-South cooperation in the health sector. At the global level, it has established a network of country offices for Brazil, Russia, India, China and South Africa (the BRICS countries) aimed at promoting exchanges of lessons and good practices and cooperation between those and other developing countries. Under this WHO cooperation mechanism, the BRICS countries meet annually to discuss emerging intra-BRICS cooperation, including among health ministers. At the regional level, WHO facilitates South-South policy dialogues through its regional offices. Its Regional Office for the Americas, the Pan American Health Organization (PAHO), convened a regional stakeholders meeting in March 2015 to obtain input and recommendations for a more strategic approach to cooperation among countries for

health development. Participants from ministries of health, national institutions and subregional entities agreed on the roles and responsibilities of PAHO in cooperation among countries for health development, the creation of a network of directors of international cooperation, and the establishment of a virtual platform for sharing information. The WHO Regional Office for the Western Pacific supports the health contributions of China to other developing countries and helped to convene the Fifth International Roundtable on China-Africa Health Collaboration to promote the sharing of experiences and the strengthening of collaboration on issues such as universal health coverage and access to essential medicines.

26. In May 2015, the World Intellectual Property Organization (WIPO), in cooperation with the Government of Peru, convened an interregional meeting of experts on South-South and triangular cooperation on access to information and knowledge, innovation support and technology transfer. The meeting brought together over 40 experts from developing countries from all geographical regions, as well as representatives from developed countries and from regional and international governmental organizations, to foster the sharing of knowledge and experiences and to provide an environment for participating countries and organizations to showcase successful South-South and triangular cooperation initiatives in these areas and share lessons learned. It provided an effective platform for South-South engagement in intellectual property matters and confirmed the importance and added value of South-South cooperation, with a number of proposals on how to take the process forward at the national, regional and international levels.

2. Research and analysis

27. The United Nations system, through its support to Southern networks, is contributing to a rising volume of research and analysis focused on South-South activities in strategic sectors such as agriculture, health, industry, energy and trade.

28. In 2015, UNCTAD has continued to issue its periodic analytical reports that serve as a primary guide for policymakers in developing countries. At its 2015 multi-year meeting of experts on economic integration and cooperation, it issued papers on thematic and regional trends, addressing topics such as effective forms of cooperation for the Millennium Development Goals and their evolution in the area of trade and development; the concept of a BRICS development bank; global value chains in South-South trade; the impact of green-box subsidies on agricultural productivity, production and international trade; the operationalization of product space for export diversification; and the development trajectory of China as a strategic opening for industrial policy in the South. In addition, UNCTAD support to South-South cooperation has evolved further in 2015, with universities and research centres involved in teaching and research on trade and development issues through its capacity-building and networking programme for academic institutions called the Virtual Institute. This endeavour involves cooperation in research, teaching and exchange of information about academic opportunities, such as calls for papers or South-South scholarships. Cooperation within the Virtual Institute academic network has generated regional research projects and workshops in Latin America and the development of studies and teaching materials developed between academics in Egypt and Jordan, in Colombia and Viet Nam, in China and Senegal, and in India and the Russian Federation. It has also led to staff exchanges whereby lecturers from one university (in Brazil, China, Ethiopia and Kenya) taught courses

in other member universities of the network (in Kenya, Mozambique, Uganda and the United Republic of Tanzania). Cooperation is facilitated through face-to-face meetings of network members and by the Virtual Institute acting as a broker of knowledge and information exchange among its members.

29. In 2014, UNEP issued a report on trade in South-South renewables that revealed that the sector grows faster than global trade as developing countries invest in green technology. At the Fifth African Rift Geothermal Conference in October 2014, UNEP presented a paper describing how South-South cooperation provides clean-energy solutions to Africa and detailing the cooperation elements used by the UNEP African Rift Geothermal Development Facility. At the fifteenth session of the African Ministerial Conference on the Environment in March 2015, UNEP announced the launch of the report on the UNEP-China-Africa cooperation programme on the environment. The report highlights the major achievements and successes of this programme as significant examples of South-South cooperation for the environment and sustainable development through capacity-building, technology transfer and information-sharing.

30. In March 2015, UNIDO published the report *Networks for Prosperity: Advancing Sustainability through Partnerships*, which highlights the relevance of networks for knowledge exchange, peer learning and coordination among South-South actors.

31. ILO undertook South-South-related research and analysis focused on decent work, including the following publications and reports: (a) *Social and Solidarity Economy in Asia: A South-South and Triangular Cooperation Perspective;* (b) *Fragile-to-Fragile Cooperation and Decent Work: An ILO Perspective*; (c) a report on South-South cooperation in the post-2015 development agenda: decent work solutions, as presented at the Global South-South Development Expo 2014; (d) *How-to Guide on South-South and Triangular Cooperation and Decent Work*, which targets United Nations system organizations and the ILO tripartite constituency (government, employer and worker representatives); and (e) the report of the eighth Brazil-ILO annual strategy review meeting.

32. In addition to monitoring health threats, WHO has used its networks to conduct invaluable research. At the global level, the *WHO Bulletin* of October 2014 focuses on BRICS and global health, while at the regional level, PAHO produced several publications on triangular cooperation, including an assessment of technical cooperation from 2008 to 2013. WHO is also finalizing an internal report with analysis and recommendations for PAHO cooperation among countries for health-development conceptual frameworks, strategies and mechanisms. The WHO Regional Office for the Western Pacific published a study on lessons learned from Mekong River countries in implementing policies for the delivery of health services.

33. During the reporting period, FAO conducted an internal review of the contribution of middle-income countries to South-South cooperation. Through the analysis of 79 South-South cooperation projects that have been implemented since 2008, it became apparent that Brazil and China had become the main partners of FAO, followed by Nigeria and Morocco, while Mexico was becoming a major partner in the Mesoamerica region.

34. Since 2011, WFP has partnered with the African Economic Research Consortium in establishing a data analysis and knowledge management hub to

support learning through the Purchase for Progress initiative, which aims at providing market opportunities to smallholder farmers. Its studies on the cost of hunger in Africa explore the social and economic implications of child undernutrition in Africa and provide a solid case for African Governments to invest in nutrition. Working with the African Union, the New Partnership for Africa's Development and the Economic Commission for Africa, WFP has provided technical and field-level support to conduct the studies, including the transfer of expertise from Latin America in partnership with the Economic Commission for Latin America and the Caribbean. The initial results of the studies have enhanced policymakers' awareness of the social and economic impact of child undernutrition, influenced high-level political platforms and promoted the integration by African countries of shared practices into nutrition programmes.

3. Knowledge-sharing

35. South-South cooperation continues to foster knowledge-sharing and the commitment of partners to making it an integral part of their development approach. While these initiatives can take place outside formal South-South mechanisms, many United Nations funds, programmes and specialized agencies seek to establish, and serve as facilitators and readily available channels or avenues for, South-South knowledge exchanges. In this way, programme countries can simply tap into existing sources of best policies and practices, which is especially crucial in crises and post-disaster settings.

36. In February 2015, UNEP established a community of practice on South-South and triangular cooperation to help to drive and enrich the organization's South-South agenda, develop common definitions and play an advocacy role while sharing good practices and lessons.

37. Under its project dedicated to enhancing South-South cooperation in the field of intellectual property, WIPO has developed web-based information, networking and exchange tools, including a roster of experts from developing countries, including least developed countries, a database of South-South technical assistance and capacity-building activities undertaken with the support of WIPO since 2009, and a matchmaking platform designed to enable the sharing of intellectual property needs and offers among developing, countries, including least developed countries, as well as the creation of collaborative partnerships. Re:Search, an online platform, provides access to intellectual property for pharmaceutical compounds, technologies, know-how and data concerning research on, and the development of medical products for, neglected tropical diseases. The multi-stakeholder Vision intellectual property platform facilitates access to information and cultural content for visually impaired persons.

38. UNFPA has supported knowledge-sharing platforms enabling technical cooperation on issues such as census, data analysis, gender-based violence, sexual and reproductive health, and maternal health. In Latin America, the Regional Office has established a platform to facilitate and stimulate South-South cooperation to achieve the goals set at the International Conference on Population and Development.

39. WHO promotes the exchange of information on lessons learned and good practices among the BRICS countries through its new network of country offices. Members meet annually to discuss emerging intra-BRICS cooperation, especially

issues relating to the annual meetings of BRICS health ministers. At the regional level, PAHO has coordinated and supported cooperation among countries in the region to strengthen health systems and improve access to high quality care. The WHO Regional Office for the Western Pacific, in partnership with the Pacific ministries of health, is operating an open learning platform for Pacific countries called the Pacific Open Learning Health Net. Through the platform's website, academic institutions in the Pacific can develop e-learning courses and have the opportunity to contribute to human resource development in the health sectors of other Pacific countries. Furthermore, this regional office is developing a platform to facilitate South-South learning among Mekong River countries.

40. The work of UNDP on mainstreaming South-South and triangular cooperation also has a strong knowledge-brokering component. For example, in 2014, UNDP helped Indonesia to share good practices with the Philippines to support the recovery efforts from Typhoon Haiyan. In addition, UNDP facilitated the transfer of knowledge from Cuba to Jamaica regarding the Cuban Risk Reduction Management Centre model. The knowledge exchange between the two countries resulted in the establishment of a risk reduction management centre in Jamaica.

41. An online library of good practices and lessons learned in relation to the Millennium Development Goals, including those pertaining to South-South cooperation, has been established by the Sustainable Development Goals Fund for use by the United Nations system. The Fund also supports a peer-to-peer exchange of knowledge and experiences in development among programme countries.

42. The South-South Experience Exchange Facility of the World Bank is a multi-donor trust fund that facilitates the sharing of development experiences and knowledge among the Bank's client countries through the funding of knowledge exchange activities. The funding of the exchanges, which is based on client-country demand, helps to achieve development results. The results in turn are stored in an interactive online knowledge exchange library that provides background materials on South-South knowledge exchanges and tools and resources to enhance the effectiveness of those exchanges, including results stories, examples of successful South-South financing approaches, a knowledge exchange planning guide and an audiovisual media library. A total of 105 countries have received knowledge from 88 countries, and more than 85 results stories have been posted on the knowledge exchange library website. According to a 2015 client survey, 92 per cent of clients indicated that World Bank South-South knowledge exchanges had helped them to achieve their objectives.

4. Capacity development

43. Capacity-building has continued to be a central part of the United Nations development system, with South-South-focused activities increasingly aimed at areas such as the development of institutional and policymaking capacity, better management of South-South initiatives and enhanced disaster risk reduction.

44. In 2014 and 2015, ILO worked with partners to develop many capacity-building activities. Most notably, it created a development cooperation academy, with sessions on South-South and triangular cooperation covering different South-South modalities, and focused on enhancing workers' and employers' capacity to apply decent-work principles and their ILO-related objectives and outcomes. These

activities also included peer-to-peer cooperation between partners in academia, among parliamentarians and between cities.

45. UNCTAD is an active participant in the Wuhan seminar, a Chinese-led initiative dedicated to building the capacity of policymakers from African countries. Both China and UNCTAD provide African policymakers with good practices on development issues of special interest to African countries. The sharing of effective policies and practices contributes to the strengthening of African institutional and policymaking capabilities. Similarly, UNCTAD is engaged in a research and capacity-building project in West and Central Africa and Latin America and the Caribbean aimed at helping countries to strengthen their capacities for pro-growth macroeconomic management and enhanced regional financial and monetary cooperation.

46. In addition to its long-established work in technical capacity-building for industrial development, UNIDO is launching a new partnership programme in 2015 in two pilot countries, Ethiopia and Senegal, that includes South-South and triangular industrial capacity building as a key component. One of the project's major capacity-building activities is setting up national South-South cooperation focal points and seeing to their institutionalization, the sustainable operation of the new institution and the enhancement of its managerial capacity.

47. Capacity-building is another role that UNDP continues to play in supporting South-South and triangular cooperation. For example, UNDP assisted Mexico (the Mexican Agency for International Development Cooperation) to consolidate its experiences as a South-South cooperation provider. In Iraq, UNDP supported the Government in establishing a South-South cooperation unit in the Prime Minister's advisory commission.

48. The UNV volunteer network constitutes an important global South-South capacity building institution. In 2014, for example, of the over 6,400 UNV volunteers representing more than 120 nationalities, over 80 per cent were from the global South and 60 per cent of those from the global South had engaged in South-South capacity-building learning activities. In 2014 and 2015, UNV offered a series of webinars on volunteering for peace and development policy promotion and programme development. Through its online volunteering platform, it provides a means of promoting South-South cooperation and building volunteer capacity. Two further examples of important UNV South-South capacity building mechanisms are the Volunteers Programme of the Economic Community of West African States (ECOWAS), supported by the African Development Bank and the European Union, and the Arab Youth Volunteering for a Better Future programme, supported by the Governments of Germany and Belgium. The ECOWAS Volunteers Programme has facilitated capacity-building in ECOWAS member States through the deployment in three pilot countries of ECOWAS volunteers from 13 of the 15 member States in the areas of health, education and youth. The Arab Youth Volunteering for a Better Future" programme aims to strengthen the infrastructure to build the skills and capacities of young people in the region, thereby enhancing their social inclusion and active participation in the socioeconomic development of their countries and creating a regional cooperation platform.

49. The WFP Centre of Excellence against Hunger in Brazil is a South-South mechanism that is recognized internationally for its accumulated experience in capacity-building for school feeding, food security and social protection. In 2014,

the Centre completed three years of operation, during which it supported more than 34 developing countries. WFP has also provided support to the efforts of partner Governments in disaster risk reduction, building on its expertise in food security and climate change services. For example, in the Caribbean and Central America, it is fostering two regional disaster risk reduction initiatives aimed at strengthening national capacities by optimizing and sharing innovative solutions and lessons through South-South and triangular cooperation. It also helped to launch a quadripartite process with Cuba, the Dominican Republic and Haiti, during a regional workshop in Havana in December 2014. In parallel, through the Central America-Cuba Plan of Action, WFP, together with the Caribbean Disaster Emergency Management Agency, supports a capacity-building exchange programme for disaster risk reduction among six Central American countries and Cuba.

5. Partnerships and innovative financing

50. The organizations of the United Nations development system have continued to create and expand partnerships in support of South-South and triangular cooperation initiatives to address emerging challenges such as rapid urbanization, climate change, energy security and volatility in development finance.

51. In 2015, ILO has been engaged in the innovative fragile-to-fragile cooperation initiative, which it organized together with the Konrad Adenauer Foundation and the Group of Seven Plus intergovernmental association. The initiative seeks to promote South-South and triangular cooperation to provide partner countries in fragile situations with an innovative response to global challenges that is adapted to their needs and development policies. Another innovative modality is city-to-city cooperation. The joint ILO-United Cities and Local Governments South-South exchanges are increasing in the areas of city-to-city cooperation and social and solidarity economy, since exchanging good practices between developing countries is an important means of achieving ownership in these areas.

52. The African Rift Geothermal Development Facility is a new regional project, which is funded by the Global Environment Facility and implemented by UNEP. Its objectives are to promote geothermal resource exploration and to develop, utilize and catalyse private and public investment in order to accelerate the development of geothermal energy through the mitigation of risks associated with resource exploration. The project, which was showcased at the Global South-South Development Expo 2014, has six member countries (Eritrea, Ethiopia, Kenya, Rwanda, Uganda and the United Republic of Tanzania) and is targeting an additional seven (Burundi, the Comoros, the Democratic Republic of the Congo, Djibouti, Malawi, Mozambique and Zambia).

53. UNIDO has forged an innovative partnership with the Deutsche Messe AG trade fair operator to scale up South-South and triangular cooperation. The partnership offers the possibility of extending the Deutsche Messe AG trade fair exhibition platform to facilitate South-South cooperation, with a country-specific and sector-specific approach and a focus on inclusive, sustainable industrial development.

54. South-South cooperation is a key principle in all UNV partnerships. One notable example is the triangular South-South initiative Living Schools, a UNV-supported partnership between the Governments of Brazil and El Salvador to facilitate knowledge transfer through volunteers in areas such as food and nutrition

security, family farming and prevention and mitigation of social and environmental disasters. UNV also has a strong strategic, operational partnership with the White Helmets, a body of the Argentine Ministry of Foreign Affairs, International Trade and Worship which designs and implements international humanitarian assistance. Its working strategy is based on cooperation, solidarity and community participation, and its activities are carried out by a volunteer corps.

55. The WFP Centre of Excellence against Hunger is a major driver of partnerships and investment for initiatives targeted at integrating food and nutrition security into social protection. These partnerships help the Centre to devise better strategies, undertake research, elaborate new materials and disseminate information. Among the Centre's notable partnerships are those with the Lula Institute, the Bill & Melinda Gates Foundation and the Department for International Development of the United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland. WFP is also engaged in joint work with FAO and the Governments of Brazil, the United Kingdom and Malawi on the Purchase from Africans for Africa Programme in an effort to develop the South-South priorities and activities of each organization and identify entry points for joint initiatives and closer collaboration in 2015 and 2016.

56. UNDP facilitated several South-South and triangular partnerships in 2014. During the Ebola crisis, for example, it partnered with the Government of South Africa in deploying autoclaves in Ebola-affected countries (Guinea, Liberia and Sierra Leone) to safely dispose of medical waste. In Armenia, UNDP initiated and supported the cooperation between Armenia and Kyrgyzstan in jointly developing a disaster risk reduction strategy. UNDP worked with the Governments of China and Denmark to support energy-related activities in Ghana and Zambia under a triangular cooperation framework.

57. FAO has partnered with a number of middle-income countries to secure technical know-how and funding to scale up successful initiatives in the areas of food and nutritional security and crop diversification and intensification through South-South cooperation. In 2014, with the support of the Government of Brazil, over 27 projects and successful South-South initiatives were implemented in the Africa and Latin America and the Caribbean regions. The $30 million FAO-China Trust Fund has enabled the fielding of a total of 255 Chinese experts in other developing countries to share the experience of China in hybrid rice technologies, fisheries policy and aquaculture. In October 2014, China further pledged to contribute $50 million to support the FAO South-South cooperation programme to improve food security and promote sustainable agricultural development over the next five years. During the reporting period, through strategic partnerships with other developing countries, FAO has secured financial resources to scale up South-South initiatives in food and nutrition security and related areas, including $15 million from Mexico, $12 million from the Bolivarian Republic of Venezuela and $1 million from Morocco.

58. The WHO Regional Office for the Americas promotes cooperation among subregional integration systems, for example, and collaborates closely with the Caribbean Public Health Agency in initiatives to enhance public health across the Caribbean subregion. It partners with the Mesoamerican Integration and Development Project on malaria, maternal and child health, dengue and universal access to health. The WHO Regional Offices for Southeast Asia and the Western Pacific together finalized and signed in September 2014 the memorandum of

understanding with the Association of Southeast Asian Nations. The key strategic areas of cooperation include emerging infectious diseases, healthy borders, access to high quality medicines and technologies, and healthy lifestyles.

59. Over the years, WIPO has developed a number of innovative and inclusive South-South partnerships to promote access to knowledge and technology, on which it strives to build in order to further promote South-South cooperation and partnerships in the field of intellectual property. Such initiatives include WIPO GREEN, an interactive marketplace that promotes innovation and the diffusion of green technologies by connecting a wide range of players, including partners from the South, in the green technology innovation value chain.

6. Monitoring and evaluation

60. With the growing importance of monitoring and evaluation for evidence-driven programming, United Nations funds, programmes and specialized agencies have integrated monitoring and evaluation into every aspect of their strategic planning, with South-South and triangular cooperation being no exception.

61. A midterm evaluation of the South-South-focused UNV programme "Arab Youth Volunteering for a Better Future" in April 2015 showed that the project had contributed to youth empowerment through volunteerism in the targeted Arab States region and indicated its significant potential for reaching and having an impact on a larger number of youth, thereby promoting wider inclusion.

62. WIPO commissioned an independent evaluation of its project on enhancing South-South cooperation on intellectual property and development among developing countries and least developed countries, which was carried out from January to March 2014. The evaluation report underlined the relevance of the project and the potential sustainability of results through further institutionalization of South-South cooperation in all WIPO activities and work. It was recognized that: (a) South-South and triangular cooperation could help WIPO to capitalize on experience that was particularly useful in the light of the specific challenges that the least developed and other developing countries faced in using intellectual property systems for their socioeconomic development; and (b) applying South-South cooperation for transfer of know-how and capacity-building responded to a priority of the United Nations. The evaluators recommended that South-South cooperation be fully mainstreamed in WIPO activities, its regular programme and its budget.

63. At FAO, on the recommendation of the FAO Office of the Inspector General, South-South cooperation officers have been outposted to each regional office. All the South-South cooperation projects are subject to the FAO standard project cycle review and evaluation.

64. UNDP has put in place a wide range of instructional, monitoring and financial instruments to promote and strengthen South-South and triangular cooperation. The results-oriented annual report of the Administrator on the UNDP strategic plan, submitted to the Executive Board in June 2015, has a distinct section on South-South and triangular cooperation, where key achievements are noted.

65. In a 2014 implementation progress report on the South-South Experience Exchange Facility of the World Bank, progress in three areas is noted. First, there has been a marked increase in mainstreaming the use of South-South knowledge exchanges in World Bank-financed projects. Secondly, there has also been a marked

increase in the number of Facility grants approved, completed and disbursed. These results show countries' growing interest in learning from their peers. Thirdly, there is growing interest and engagement on the part of middle-income countries; not only have their contributions risen in the past three years, but also the number of these countries seeking knowledge from other countries has increased. In 2015, the World Bank is reviewing the overall strategy of the Facility in order to improve the catalytic role of South-South knowledge exchanges. In September 2015, the World Bank will curate its open learning campus to enable clients and staff to highlight and share key lessons learned from South-South knowledge exchanges.

C. United Nations support for regional and interregional South-South cooperation

66. The five regional economic commissions are at the forefront of subregional, regional and interregional South-South cooperation. In response to the growing demand for support to South-South cooperation at the regional and subregional levels, the regional commissions have advanced South-South cooperation by undertaking high-calibre policy research and analysis on issues of importance to their member States, convening high-level policy dialogues, forging strategic partnerships, and promoting specific capacity-development and other initiatives, all aimed at promoting regional integration. South-South cooperation is now reflected in their key policy frameworks and strategic plans. The partnership strategy of the Economic Commission for Africa (ECA), which was approved by the Conference of African Ministers of Finance, Planning and Economic Development in March 2014, includes South-South and triangular cooperation as important vehicles to advance the work of the Commission. The ECA African Minerals Development Centre has the mandate to implement the Africa Mining Vision, the priority of which is to facilitate the emergence of regional value chains with respect to Africa's mineral resources through focused cooperation among mineral-rich African countries. As regards policy dialogues, the ECA Land Policy Initiative supported the International Conference on Land Governance in Emerging and Developing Countries, held in Beijing in October 2014. The Conference brought together researchers and policymakers from Africa, Asia and Latin America to discuss land governance reforms and exchange knowledge and good practices. The ECA keynote presentation on the land reform agenda in Africa: achievements, challenges and way forward for African countries generated considerable interest and indications of future support and collaboration. In addition, ECA has supported other South-South cooperation programmes to facilitate knowledge exchange and information-sharing, such as the Climate for Development in Africa programme, an initiative of the African Union Commission, the African Development Bank and ECA that was established to create a solid foundation for Africa's response to climate change. The programme acts as a knowledge hub through the maintenance of a repository for information, knowledge-sharing and capacity-building purposes with member countries.

III. Coordination of United Nations support to South-South coordination

67. In its capacity as the secretariat of the High-level Committee on South-South Cooperation, the United Nations Office for South-South Cooperation has continued to coordinate South-South cooperation across the United Nations system by organizing intergovernmental and inter-agency meetings, monitoring progress on the United Nations system-wide mainstreaming of South-South and triangular cooperation and preparing related reports of the Secretary-General and the Administrator of UNDP.

68. In 2014, the Office led work that resulted in the establishment of the South-South and Triangular Cooperation Task Team within the United Nations Development Group in early 2015 in response to decision 18/1 of the High-level Committee on South-South Cooperation. The Office co-chairs the Task Team with ILO. This has provided the Office with an opportunity to catalyse inter-agency collaborative initiatives to mainstream South-South and triangular cooperation in United Nations operational activities. In order to promote the direct contribution of South-South and triangular cooperation to development initiatives in various sectors at the country and regional levels, the Task Team, which is open to over 30 United Nations organizations, is embedded within the Sustainable Development Working Group of the United Nations Development Group. The primary task of the Working Group is to support Member States in integrating the sustainable development goals into national and regional operational activities for development.[4]

69. The United Nations Office for South-South Cooperation has also continued to serve United Nations organizations through its multifaceted South-South service architecture. At a workshop organized by the Office in collaboration with the United Nations Department of Field Support in January 2015, an agreement was reached to use the Web of Information for Development (WIDE), developed and maintained by the Office, to support United Nations efforts in institutional outreach for civilian capacities. The new functionality of WIDE will initially be applied to help to reduce the five core gap areas outlined in the report of the Secretary-General on civilian capacity in the aftermath of conflict (A/69/696-S/2014/5).

70. At the Global South-South Development Expo 2014, organized by the United Nations Office for South-South Cooperation in collaboration with the Organization of American States, more than 70 South-South and triangular cooperation solutions and practices were showcased in Washington, D.C., to more than 656 members of Government, the United Nations, the private sector, civil society and academia. The various elements of the Expo, including the leadership round table, the multiple technical solution exchange forums and the annual meeting of Directors-General of national development cooperation agencies, served to display the intellectual leadership of the South in development cooperation as well as the relevance of existing Southern solutions to pressing development issues.

71. The South-South Global Assets and Technology Exchange established seven new country centres in Bahrain, Bangladesh, Egypt, Iran (Islamic Republic of),

[4] See report of the Secretary-General (SSC/18/MI/1) for more details on the coordination of United Nations support to South-South cooperation and on the Task Team on South-South and Triangular Cooperation of the United Nations Development Group.

Samoa, Turkey and Yemen and a regional centre in the Asia-Pacific region. In 2014, the Exchange, in collaboration with the United Nations Office of the High Representative for the Least Developed Countries, Landlocked Developing Countries and Small Island Developing States, launched two new South-South technology transfer facilities: one in Samoa for small island developing States and the other in Benin for least developed countries. Furthermore, the Exchange co-hosted with the Joint United Nations Programme on HIV/AIDS a special event on inclusive partnerships in health during the 2014 Summer Youth Olympic Games in Nanjing, China. The Exchange, in collaboration with WIPO through its interactive marketplace, WIPO-GREEN, which promotes the innovation and diffusion of green technologies, has contributed to the signing of 16 letters of intent. It also supported WIPO South-South initiatives in Lima; provided financial and technical support to the One Million Business Women Online project; and expanded its partnership with key institutions, including the Bill & Melinda Gates Foundation, the Caribbean Centre for Competitiveness and the Africa Agriculture and Trade Investment Fund.

72. Another prime example of coordinated South-South mainstreaming is the United Nations Inter-Agency Cluster on Trade and Productive Capacity, originally launched in April 2008, which includes 15 United Nations organizations as members: FAO, ILO, the International Trade Centre, UNCTAD, the United Nations Commission on International Trade Law, UNDP, UNEP, UNIDO, the United Nations Office for Project Services, the World Trade Organization and the five regional commissions. The coordination mechanism acts as a strategic tool for the effective functioning of system-wide coherence through an integrated approach for delivering programmes and operations relating to trade and productive sectors. By acting together when formulating, delivering and monitoring the impact of their assistance, the cluster entities are better aligned with Member States' development needs and strategies. A constant exchange of experiences and information among secretariats on policy, managerial and financial issues enables participating organizations to prepare joint proposals on future programmes and development operations at the national and regional levels. Since its establishment, the cluster has been a dynamic instrument for ensuring the inclusion of trade and related matters in United Nations Development Assistance Frameworks and a successful mechanism for drawing up joint programmes in "One United Nations" pilots and in "Delivering as One" countries. The cluster coordinates the trade-related development contributions of different entities to the global agendas of Aid for Trade, the Millennium Development Goals, the new sustainable development goals and the post-2015 development agenda.

IV. South-South and triangular cooperation in the context of the post-2015 development agenda

73. United Nations Member States have emphasized that South-South and triangular cooperation will be among the means of implementation of the post-2015 development agenda. In the outcome document of the United Nations summit on that agenda, Member States called for enhanced South-South and triangular cooperation on access to science, technology and innovation and on knowledge-sharing. Furthermore, they recognized South-South cooperation and triangular cooperation as effective means to enhance the capacity of developing countries in

implementing sustainable development goals. In the Sendai Framework for Disaster Risk Reduction 2015-2030, adopted at the Third United Nations World Conference on Disaster Risk Reduction held in Sendai, Japan, in March 2015, Member States identified the significance of South-South cooperation in reducing disaster risk and called for the strengthening of such cooperation as part of the global partnerships on disaster risk issues.

74. UNDP and the United Nations Office for South-South Cooperation supported the Government of Bangladesh in organizing a high-level meeting on South-South and triangular cooperation in the context of the post-2015 development agenda. Participants stressed, among other things, that achieving the sustainable development goals hinged heavily on the application of science, technology and innovation in the South, especially in tackling the issues of insufficient food supply, limited value-chain technology, land degradation and climate change. They also emphasized the need for improved tax policy and a strong regulatory framework to combat tax evasion and address illicit financial flows. As a follow-up, a high-level multi-stakeholder strategy forum was held in the Macao Special Administrative Region of China in August 2015 to develop a long-term vision and partnerships for South-South cooperation towards achieving the sustainable development goals.

V. Conclusions and recommendations

75. In the past year, the United Nations development system has shown a commendable shift from its previous ad hoc support to South-South cooperation to a more systematic approach, as evidenced in various sectors, thanks to a concerted system-wide effort to incorporate South-South cooperation in many organizations' strategic plans. I encourage United Nations development organizations to increasingly and systematically apply South-South and triangular cooperation to transnational development challenges of the South that require collective action, such as climate change, communicable diseases, infrastructure development and the provision of public goods.

76. The current work of United Nations organizations to develop thematic strategies for the implementation of South-South cooperation is a positive development. As implementation of the sustainable development goals gets under way, the United Nations should increasingly leverage South-South cooperation to bolster international collective action in addressing issues such as rapid urbanization, youth unemployment, food and nutrition security, and pandemic diseases, building on work that is already taking shape.

77. Middle-income countries such as Brazil, China, Mexico, Morocco and Nigeria have become outstanding supporters of FAO initiatives to improve food and nutrition security. These concerted efforts are encouraging and merit replication in more strategic areas of the sustainable development goals, drawing on the technical expertise of various United Nations organizations and driving the development of capacity for effective management of South-South cooperation by middle-income countries.

78. Research and analysis specific to South-South cooperation have also been increasing in the United Nations system. As the data revolution takes hold, I encourage United Nations organizations to direct more of their research efforts to providing data and evidence-based policy advice on the contribution of South-South

and triangular cooperation to meeting specific targets of the sustainable development goals and the impact of that contribution. Growing support by the United Nations development system to South-South networks for knowledge-sharing, peer learning, voice and coordination among Southern actors should also be put to good use in the formulation or strengthening of multi-stakeholder partnerships for development in the North and South. In this regard, the systematic approaches to knowledge-sharing reported by FAO, ILO, UNDP, UNEP, WFP, the World Bank and others should be widely emulated.